

The Norwegian-US Friendship – How I see its Future

By Bettina Steen

As he sat there, under a velvet of thousands twinkling stars more than a million miles away, the polar bear could not help but wondering if the competitor gazing into his deep, dark eyes was too much of a rival. The bison, he knew, was a strong and powerful leader, though a bit misunderstood at times. Animals of lesser importance fed on his wealth, at the same time as they feared him, as any born leader should be feared.

"Your move," the bison uttered, flexing his muscles, making the polar bear freeze. "My move?" The polar bear looked down at the chessboard and his wandering mind drew nearer. "Risky," the bison grinned, when the polar bear moved one of his knights further away from its king. "How about I give you *my* knight," the bison swiftly crossed the enemies' path with his own knight, "in exchange for more of your elks in Afghanistan?" The dark knight rested in B4 – an easy catch for the white queen.

The game had lasted for quite a while, but such a question had not yet entered. Whatever the reason was, the restricting rope surrounding the question had slowly loosened. The polar bear thought about the proposition for a while, before acting. He had already sent a notable herd to Afghanistan.

"I am sorry, but I will not increase my contribution of elks, my consciousness will not allow me," the polar bear responded firmly, and he could feel the cold air closing in on him.

The bison lost his grin. His voice was as firm as the cave surrounding them when he spoke.

"I am disappointed, I must say. You know of the special bonds between us and if you are about to take those for granted, you must be joking?"

The polar bear coldly replied "likewise".

At that moment, the polar bear knew he had struck a nerve. Suddenly no one in the cave felt safe.

On this battlefield of a chessboard lay several pawns who had fought to the very end, but been defeated by the upper power. That's why the pawns go first.

Silence.

One pawn moved, two rooks moved, one queen on the stroll, but not a voice could be heard. The bison still wanted a close relationship with the polar bear, which he believed was "punching above his weight". The bison felt a chilly breeze from the opening to the outside world behind him, and hence he moved his queen dangerously close to the polar bears king, and waited.

They could choose to go their separate ways, the polar bear knew this.

"It's more to me than just celebrities and Oprah, you know," the bison had once explained.

"And it's more to me than just brown cheese and ski jumpers".

"I've realised that," the bison had answered.

The two animals disagreed on several subjects, but the high amount of respect they had for each other made them both look past that. The polar bear knew that the bison stood for human rights and freedom, but yet he had evicted foes in the past, and still did. To the polar bear, the bison was a paradox. Nevertheless, an important paradox.

The spot F5 was free, until one of the polar bears bishops claimed it. There were few team members left on the chessboard, and it felt as empty as the animals' conversation.

The polar bear looked up, once again glancing into those intense eyes on the other side of the chessboard.

"I need to know your alliances whereabouts, polar."

"I am on your side, bison," came quickly from the polar bear without a doubt.

Once again silence. The polar bear tilted his massive head, waiting for the bison to say something, anything.

The bison just nodded persuasively and uttered those famous words; "we can fix it."

As they sat there, under a velvet of thousands twinkling stars more than a million miles away, the polar bear could not help but wonder if the competitor gazing into his deep, dark eyes was too much of a rival. A rival, it seemed to the polar bear, is best kept as a

friend.

For the first time for a very long period, the polar bear and the bison shared the exact same view. Therefore the bison quickly moved his black coloured queen, and placed it in front of the polar bears twin-in-colour king, blocking its every opportunity.

“Checkmate”.